



-Barbara Kingsolver, Small Wonder, 2002

Sustainable Planning Promotes Longevity of Fort Carson

Detour signs, orange cones, mountains of dirt and herds of earth moving equipment are evidence of the growth taking place daily on Fort Carson. The new infrastructure and roadways popping up pave the way for new units and Soldiers slated to come to the installation

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While growth is occurring at a rapid pace, Directorate of Public Works Master Planning is adopting new U.S Army sustainable development practices along the way to secure Fort Carson's longterm success as an installation.

In January, the U.S. Army released a new Master Planning Technical Manual, which is a tool for military master planners to achieve an installation's long-term goals in a systematic and logical approach. A significant change in the manual is that the approach taken by Army master planners is that they must now incorporate sustainable practices.

The MPTM states, "Sustainability is not a program, process or system. It is a concept – a way of thinking about the long-term effects of actions taken today...A sustainable installation:

- Is focused on the mission within the context of its natural and built environments that includes land management, operations and infrastructure.
- Fully executes present missions without compromising either its ability to accomplish future missions or the ability of neighboring communities to realize their aspirations.
- Requires additional focus on the social, economic and physical well-being of Soldiers and civilian personnel, their families and communities, all of whom are impacted.
- Is cross-functional, involving all stakeholders."

Integrating sustainable practices in to master planning includes several major areas of emphasis including locating new construction sites within the existing traffic and utilities areas. It is less expensive for a project to use or upgrade existing utilities rather than constructing new utility lines and roadways, which then increase future maintenance and repair costs.

In order to reduce energy costs, master planners look for ways to incorporate energy savings and cost-effective systems into the initial construction project costs. A balance has to be struck between the cost of a building system, (heating, air conditioning or effective insulation), with the long-term operating cost of that system. For military construction it is often challenging to justify the high initial cost of an energy efficient system with the long term operations and maintenance cost of a less expensive system.

Maximizing the amount of land available, requires planners to look at increasing the density of the built-up space, which means increasing the useable space per acre by constructing multi-story buildings or building structures closer together. In the case of Fort Carson, there is a limited amount of space in the cantonment area and the space has to be used more efficiently. New buildings slated for construction on Fort Carson will be three and four stories high, a departure from single and two story buildings previously constructed.

To address traffic congestion, air pollution and the rise in fuel prices, planners also focus on decreasing the dependence on personal automobiles. Fort Carson growth planning needs to encourage and facilitate other means of transportation including people

walking more than driving to their destinations. This can be done by locating the services people use in one or two general areas that make walking a feasible option.

motives will follow as we wise up.

Several major construction projects underway are incorporating some of these sustainable master planning practices by maximizing useable land space and encouraging walking to reduce traffic congestion.

The new Heavy Brigade Combat Team area under construction near Specker and Titus Boulevards will co-locate company operations buildings with the unit motor pools so Soldiers can walk instead of driving between the two locations. Additionally, the barracks will be located close to the unit and headquarters operations.

The new 4th Infantry Division Headquarters will have the associated battalion headquarters, company operations facilities and barracks located immediately east and a little north of the new headquarters.

New Fort Carson Family Housing units being constructed at the northern end of the "Old Hospital Complex" will be located close to schools, the post exchange, commissary and a future daycare facility for the convenience of residents and to encourage walking.

Rapid growth is a sticky problem to tackle with the speed in which development needs to occur. Implementing sustainable master planning principles helps ensure planning and development are acceptable at the installation-level and that Fort Carson continues to be a sought after assignment and a desired place to live and work.

For more information, call the community planner at 526-4265.